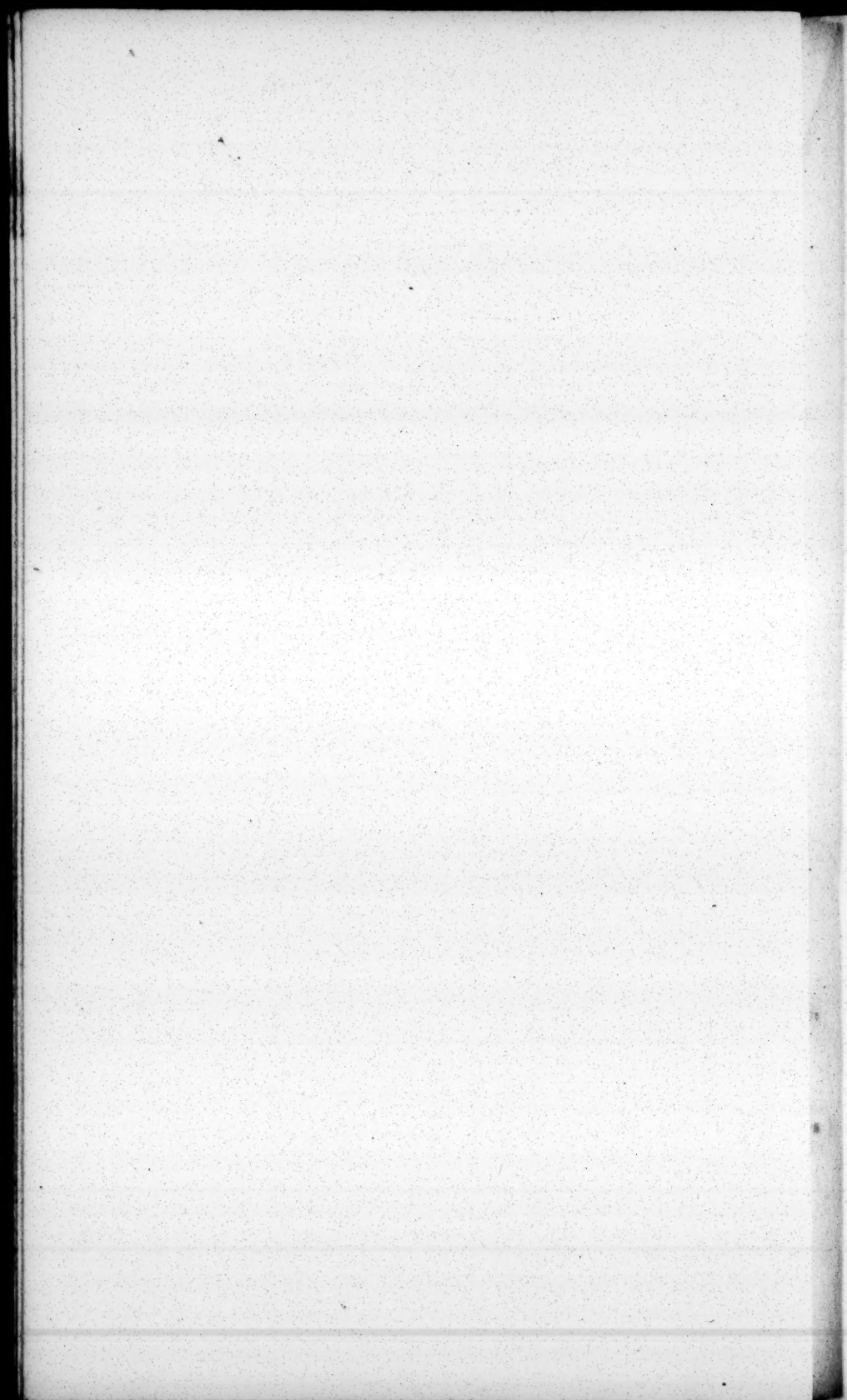


MEMORANDUMS
OF THE
Face of the Country
IN
SWITZERLAND.

To short absence I could yield;
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return.
PARADISE LOST.

LONDON:
Printed by COOPER and GRAHAM.
MDCCXCIX.



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AT Morges we had a view of Mount Blanc for the first time through a cleft of the Chablais rocks in Savoy ; we saw its summit, indeed, some minutes before, but at this cleft it presents itself formally and completely to view : and now the Chablais of a sudden puts on a new and more majestic appearance.

The view from the Signal of Aubonne compasses the lake from end to end, but the western one should be seen by the rising, and the eastern by the setting sun. The mouth of the

Rhone cannot, I believe, be descried. You see distinctly the glaciers of Mount Blanc rising up on its volume in ridges ; hue of the mount itself that particular one between the folds of a white rose. Its superiority over the surrounding heights was shewn in a striking manner the sun not being set to it until long after he had been to every other—and truly such an object, if any on our hemisphere, is worthy of meeting singly and of fixing the regard of that luminary.—At one extremity of the lake the situation of Geneva could be guessed at by its smoke only : at the other, Villeneuve seemed immersed up to its spires in the water. Behind our right shoulder, successively as the day departed, the dark-red purple of the Jura, then its gray blue, afterwards blackest green.—The bank of the Vaud along

the Swifts side of the lake running towards us from the mountains behind Vevay and, as soon as it arrives on this side of Laufanne, disemboing itself as it were on the rich plain that was poured around us on every side—Groves of oak—country-houses—corn-fields—vineyards, and all the towns and villages of the Pays de Vaud—This view certainly more extensive than that from Laufanne, and it has Mount Blanc. It shews however the lake in such a manner as to contract it on every side, neither is the aspect that the mountains present here so happy as at Laufanne nor so varied—but where else in what other fortunate spot shall we find an Italy and Switzerland in one.

We went on to the valley of Joux to have a still more extensive prospect. Every step we made, Mount

Blanc surged still higher in the skies, seeming to spurn beneath him the rest of the Alps.—The valley of Joux, considering its elevation on the summit of the Jura, must be allowed to be uncommonly fertile, it is extremely shallow for its breadth, and is said to be not unlike Derbyshire—As to any admiration it may have raised, it enjoys a great advantage in that it is natural to compare it to other valleys situated like it on the summit of mountains, in particular the Alps; otherwise it would surely not appear so beautiful as many others. Instead too of cold bleak winds or of pent-up vapours, as in the Alps, you are refreshed by fine breezes tempered in the sun.

The signal is planted on the Vauillon, and it takes an hour's very fast walking (from the town) to arrive

there—the loneliness of the way, and its being haunted by wolves and bears, occasion the wind (every now and then as it twangs in your ears) to startle and alarm you.—I got there quite out of breath some minutes before sunset—what a profound solitude surrounds one at these heights in the sky—how keenly too the wind blows. On all sides, from the immense distance, every thing appears as through a mist and darkly.

Between the southern and western points of the compass the whole valley of Joux lay in prospect before me. The lake of Rouffes—the intermediate river weaving its way from lake to lake like a worm.—The road, along which we had come up the valley, a loose-stretched cord. Westward lay France whose ridges ran across my view far and wide the beginning and

the end of them indiscernible, not only on account of the distance but of the setting sunbeams that glared in my eyes.—Towards the north nothing but mountain wastes and wilds.—Between the north and east I descried a lake, and a city at this extremity of it. It was easy to guess that it must be Yverdun with the lake of Morat by its side. Farther to the right specks or shadows, said to be lakes also. A broad and lofty mountain covered Orbe, and others again the picturesque valley of Travers: all these objects, together with the Vevay mountains, the canton of Friburgh, and glaciers of Berne, completed this quarter.—Between the eastern and southern points broadly gleamed the Geneva lake revealed however to view as far only as the promontory of Yvoire, that horn of its crescent

being eclipsed by the mountains. Beyond lay the Swiss Alps on one part, and those of Savoy on the other, when Mount Blanc proved to be without effort the first—One nearly forgets to observe the valley of Romainmôtier, it lies so directly under one's feet with its low stone walls like silver rims intersecting it in every direction.

The precipices here are as steep as any among the Alps; but they allure you to the brink with a fearful curiosity by the shrubs and verdure with which they are embellished. After having gazed at every object, near or distant, that is commanded by this signal, I looked back on the west, and found that the sun had now been some time under the horizon—Before Night could yet overstride the landscape I was at the town.—The next night I got back to Lausanne, and the morn-

ing after continued my journey before the clock had struck five.

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Whoever has seen the sea in a storm may form an idea of the Chablais mountains, rolling in large tumultuous waves, and tumbling and dashing to the lake of Geneva from Mount Blanc whose face is hidden by them.

That which seems to be fine dark-brown mould scattered upon those rocks, are firs; for they are at the height of more than three thousand feet perpendicular above the surface of the water, and ten miles distant in a straight line. The four regions of vegetation mentioned by botanists distinctly marked: corn fields and meadows, woods, pastures, mosses and lichens,—above naked rock. From

the base of these the rich bank of Evian rough with woods is lengthened out, framing the lake for some miles towards Geneva.

—The sun rises at one extremity of the lake, and sets at the other. At meeting full his setting look the rocks around Villeneuve though muffled with thickest streaky air blush and sparkle like carbuncle. But when he rises you should view the Jura, she smiles as she gracefully files off towards Geneva, her right shoulder turned from the sun, and dropping down her mists at his beams.

Changeful appearances of the Pays de Vaud in the morning and evening, in the spring and autumn, under a strong gust of wind, or a storm of thunder and lightning. Ever-changeful waters of the conscious lake; violet-purple, purple of roses and of

lilachs, veins of emerald, fluid sapphire. Viewing them all in one from the signal, whenever the sky lours, they fret like molten lead. Before rain comes on, currents are remarked on their surface, describing deviously their lucid paths like rivers advanced some way into the sea and not yet mingled with it.

To help you to a choice of objects in a landscape so diversified, so original, so extensive, the clouds become by fits frugal of the sun-shine and spread it sparingly here and there upon some interesting spot, thus fetching it out to view for a short moment. And as this partial light travels in time over the whole landscape in succession, you do the same, and yet never become familiar enough with any part of it.

Members of the landscape large,

grand, majestic, and that harmoniously combine together.

That morning the air was calm and serene so as to agree perfectly with my then tone of mind.—Pale indistinct brown of the Jura—Strong-marked blue rim on the outline of the western part of the lake across it in its greatest breadth. Promontory of Yvoire sweeps into the lake like a reversed scythe. Contrast between the Chablais and the Jura, the latter like Milton's Raphael had its head waist and feet winged with clouds.—All the Chablais tipped or rather thick-plated with dawn. The lake stained and striped with blue and green of various shades. The fresh-green meadows of Savoy, its woods like the tufted moss, and its aged rocks above with their dishevelled snows, all swelled out to view and seemed to have been urged

two-thirds nearer the Lausanne shore than during the winter. A fishing smack sailing at a distance shewed no bigger than a down feather, the towns on the Savoyard shore than children's little paper boats. The bank on this shore, from Lausanne to near Vevay, covered for two or three leagues with walled terraces would have resembled the pictures we see of fortified rocks, had not the vines wrapped them round with one continued web of the brightest verdure.

As you proceed to Vevay the mountains of Savoy gradually drop down behind the Evian bank as through a trap-door—The moment you get half-way they have entirely vanished.

From the steeple of Vevay cathedral you behold the grand vista that from the mouth of the Rhone is pierced into the Valois; its extremity blocked up

by a mountain in the shape of a broad skittle.—Alternate advance of the mountains on each side—the Rhone welling out into the lake. Numberless winding wrinkles and furrows on the sides of the Chablais, worn by the rains snows and springs trickling down them ; so many tortuous vallies, the sinking beds of as many rivers. These less sinuous in the Villeneuve mountains as they stand more upright. The Evian bank fore-shortened, and thereby seems much thicker—immense breadth of the lake at that part. —If now you turn yourself round to the right (where you see the lake in profile) there the Jura seems a long-extended blueish-gray shadow, and the Côte proves to be its shelving sides only. The corn-fields and towns thereon like so many spots of sunshine. The bank towards Lausanne,

for a league or more, finely clouded with trees and distinct with villages—The rest is a fractured shell of ground that shuts up the view, rising with broken edges all around the remaining sides of the cathedral. It is covered with vines up two-thirds of its height, and then with pastures and woods.—Report of cannon on the opposite shore of Savoy, conveyed by the lake which serves as a sound-board to every noise on its borders.

All the way in proceeding from Laufanne to Villeneuve you might perceive the lake waning like a half-moon from east to west.—Meillerie, the castle of Clarens and its fabled grove, have had a happier destiny than to be described here only ; as well as all this country which in any competition for excellence that it may have with others shall certainly too have

my vote and wishes ! Beautiful rocks, intermingled with verdure and trees, line this part of the shore (from Moutrû to Villeneuve)—Near the castle of Chillon the road wafts you down to the foot of lawns, over which several robust trees arching aloft their branches form interrupted indeed but spacious and airy porticoes—higher up, rich meadows and other woods, in their turn overhung by high-piled banks of rock, their edges jagged with fir. We stood here awhile to ~~enjoy~~ ^{enjoy} the breezes from the lake.

Fine afternoon and sun-set as we got to Bex.—Sanguine tints in the clouds—Summits of the rocks (from the sun's reflection) of pallid porphyry—The walk up to the signal at this place is very interesting, here too is a continued bower formed by lofty-spreading trees. When arrived there you

behold a broad valley eighteen miles in length. The horizon on all sides made up by mountains, it glances off however to a distance at the great inlet into the Valois on the left-hand of your prospect as it does also on the right to admit a part of the lake—in the first instance the view stoops down into the Valois though still without alighting on the ground. Half-way between Bex and the lake of Geneva there is a long insulated crag holding up a square Roman tower with ruins scattered near it; they seemed to be almost drowned in trees. As usual there is on the mountains a struggle between cultivation and barrenness. Their limits are so unsettled that each is alternately making incroachments on the other.—Some of the richest vallies that have all the tenderness and freshness of infancy about them

are careffed in a manner by a neighbouring mountain, or by two together as they unite to support the precious burden.—It is generally at the point where the mountains rise off the plain that the towns gather in so many shells. Below our feet the bottom of the valley formed a small plain whose verdure was of the brightest green, flourished over by trees though oftener divided by them in rather too formal and angular a manner—however in general no country can be more agreeable to the fancy, it is the reign of Dryads and Hamadryads—the foliage is so thick that the villages, catholic chapels, convents, could with difficulty be spied among it. At this time there happening to be rain and thunder the blacker the firs over St. Maurice grew at one end of the prospect, the more luminous

became the lake of Geneva at the other.

The next morning we entered the Valois by St. Maurice—Rich magnificent scene of rocks and woods that overhang it.—Having passed through the town you remark standing on your right hand a prodigious wall of rock, horizontally intersected by shrubs in several places; half-way up a hermitage has nestled itself.—Proceeding farther, you have on your left-hand lofty mountains where trees and verdure exude and swell out in numberless spots—Cottages here and there bring to my mind Marmontel's Shepherds of the Alps.—Stringy cascades whose gleam is seen only by fits, and which do not rebound from the rocks but clinging like slime or oil slide down them.—At last there is a violent ebullition, so to say, of woods which

copiously gush out of the bank and hurry down in a long sweep to the Rhone.

Two hours or more after we had entered the Valois, I thought I saw at a great height up the mountain, on my right hand, a thick white column of clouds driven forcibly downwards, but by the crash with which it fell and the mists that the breeze ever winnows off it I knew it for the fall of water at this place. Although you at first perceive it to be but a third part the height of the bank yet, upon coming nearer, it appears to project from the very summit itself.

There are two or three streams, besides the main one, that trickle copiously down the rock, white as milk in several veins growing thick one out of another.

As I saw this cascade several times

I found that it assumes a different appearance according to the season, weather, or time of day. For the next time I passed that way during the great heats it was big-swollen by the liquefaction of the snows so that its several currents were confused into one. The last time that I saw it was at about nine o'clock in the morning, in the latter end of autumn. The stream had developed its long silvery tresses, letting them run out their whole length until they had reached the ground; they were largely dishevelled and tossed in wreaths by the breeze which happened to blow freshly at that time, but no sooner had the sun shone out than a rainbow approaching confined and braided them. And you might at pleasure make it slide up and down the cascade alternately from top to bottom: you

may even take it off entirely by proceeding a little farther along the road ; when upon turning your eye you behold nothing but the cascade waving in ringlets.

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The country in general, from Vevay to Gruyeres, meads and pastures decked with trees. This is one of the favourite countries of landscape painters. Having passed Gruyeres our journey lay along the banks of the river Sane or Sareen. Its waters are of a bright sea-green colour ; it flows in a serpentine line in its valley at the foot of a ridge of mountains. The slopes or declivities of these were more or less gradual, were variegated with clumps of trees, flowery meadows dancing through them. Sometimes they stem the river by a rocky bank,

sometimes by a plain-sheaving gravel shore or a grafs-plot. Their heads lofty and stiff with fir, but those on our right-hand were of less elevation, and laying aside the terrors of their brows they approached quite close to us with the mildest aspect.—Nothing but pastures—At last the track of the river (of which the road never once loses sight) conducted us across that mountain that is pitched here as a sort of land-mark between the cantons of Friburgh and Berne. This side of it steep and picturesque in the highest degree; its pastoral scenes bring a second time to my mind the Shepherdess of the Alps. The higher we ascended the more profound did the valley become along which the river was passing; though as often the contrary happens.—Its sides masted with some thousand pines—Every now and then

we amused ourselves at beholding through their openings the river fuming below amidst the loose fragments of rock that the channel had thrown down in its way, twisting round them or tripping up or leaping over them. One while it was fain to start aside—then it would suddenly sink down, leaving the road to halt after it as well as it could—next it would whirl round behind a crowd of trees and there escape from view.—By keeping constantly the track of this river we arrived in a valley which may be called *Rosfiniere* or *Rouge-monde* for it begins with one village, and ends near the other. There the mountains on all sides were of moderate elevation, scarcely mountains indeed, yet scarcely hills. The pastures extended to the very top with herds

and flocks of sheep and goats—we slept at Geffenay.

Set off at five in the morning—The sun mused sweetly upon the minister's house, this and the church were of stone; they are the only buildings in a village that are not of wood. The valley preserves much the same appearance as yesterday, as then milk-sheds and wooden hamlets with wide slouching roofs—At Zweyfmman we changed our guide, for now the river Kander began to shew us the way and was to conduct us to Thun.—In general if you have seen one of these valleys you have seen them all. It is difficult to express the chearful calm and tranquillity the mind feels in travelling through them. On all sides the view is short, being shut in by green mounts; and the only passengers that you meet with on the road are the

peasants passing to and fro about their ordinary occupations. Scarce a sound to be heard but the tinkling of the herds bells. The hour of noon indeed may be told by the insect chimes, and midnight by those of the lone gnat (to the wakeful) : but the rest of the twenty-four hours from morning to noon from noon to evening might be easily marked by these sounds varying from shrill to grave—Such is the soft music that lulls you asleep at evening and awakens you by morning.—The farther you proceed towards Thun the valley grows wider and more variegated. At last it conducts you into a rocky strait of a great height—this again brings you to a wide open country—Two or three hours after, you arrive at the lake of Thun and proceed along its banks to the city of that name.

When I first went over this lake its waters were of a fresh raw green with foam driven over it like numberless chips before the wind—Its character is simple and rustic ; it forms a contrast to the magnificence of the Geneva lake, there the pomp of cities and towns, here wooden villages. As it is narrower than that extensive lake by at least two thirds, you see the opposite banks from either shore distinctly ; you might have an exact picture of it by presenting a diminishing glass over against that part of the lake of Geneva that lies between Villeneuve and Evian, the whole tour of the Thun banks containing nothing that will not be found in that compass excepting one or two cascades, and that the villages here are all of wood.

Another time in passing from the Valois to Grindelwald the road con-

ducted us unexpectedly to this lake along the banks of which we walked the best part of a day. There was a fine morning scene, Nature seemed not yet fully awake; a dripping cloud, that had lingered after all the rest had departed with the night, drooped between the folds of the mountain at that part where there is a small creek. Upon the whole it appeared to me more beautiful than I had before thought it, owing perhaps to its being surveyed from a better point of view than any you can find on its waters; the hay-season too having just begun, the breeze beguiled at once several of the senses. The bank along which we were walking often engaged me in a pleasing reverie that I was still near home rambling in the fields, but as often some stupendous object as a mountain or the lake striking my eyes

diffolved one charm by raising another. The path in some parts betakes itself into a grove of firs or pines ; sometimes it glanced along the very edge of the water, then suddenly sprung away again—then it would soar and hover above it, as hesitating whether to descend or not—

The country (called the Inter-lachen) that joins this lake to that of Brientz bears a striking resemblance to that between Villeneuve and Aigle on the road to Bex. The lake of Brientz is banked up except at the two extremities by lofty mountains ; they are well wooded but those on the right hand as you proceed to Brientz are more rocky barren and steep than those on the left which shelve more into the water, and are variegated in their whole length by meadows, orchards, and three or four villages—

Half-way there is near the right-hand shore a little stud of an island that with its garden and cottage embosses the surface of the water. This lake is about three miles in breadth, and nine or ten in length; it is profound, in some parts drawing two hundred and fifty fathoms—it is said to resemble that of Wallenstadt more than any other. The village of Brientz, which gives its name to it, is the largest in the Canton of Berne; it furnishes no less than three companies of some regiment or other and the Swiss regiments are very full, the Vatteville for instance consisting of two thousand five hundred men: this village is built entirely of wood.—At the extremity is the Oberhasley—Often as you proceed along this valley a cascade springs forth suddenly over your head from rocks as exquisitely cut and

polished as prismatic glaſs (though it is a certain harmonious and poetical arrangement that forms their chief beauty.) Meanwhile the firſt on the edges of the banks ſeem according to their diſtance, one minute of the exact ſize and ſhape of nettles, at another of young rows of box—Above the town of Meyringen is a ruined tower, the proſpect from which is very like that from the ſignal of Bex. Inſtead of the Rhone and the Geneva lake indeed, it is the Aar and the Bri-entz—there too the foliage predominates over every other object, here the rocks and caſcades—

In returning, I met with nothing elſe on the whole way to Berne, as I did not ſee the proſpect from the caſtle of Thun from the bad weather.

(In an arcenal, ſuch as this of Berne, one reads in the moſt lively and expe-

ditious manner the common-place history of a state. Thus you have the succession of the chief magistrates, of the persons that have perished for treason real or not, names of provinces conquered, trophies and victories won, and above all you may trace the progress made in the arts of offence as guns from their first invention to their latest improvement, &c. But one incident in the arsenal of Berne I think more beautiful than almost any to be found in common-place histories. There are several old stands of arms and complete trains of artillery which have never once been taken out since first placed there by the workman's hand. There are others equally untouched that by their form must be near two hundred years old, and yet no enemy that has at any time entered Switzerland ever returned out of it.)

Half a day's journey to the left of Berne is the lake of Bienne, in the centre of which is the isle of St. Peter. Having slept at Nidau on the North-East end of this lake we rowed off for the island at four in the morning ; the approaching heat of the day was announced by the vapours that steamed off the river and lake. The whole bank on the right hand elevated and steep ; at the lower parts the vines had realized as much as possible of the soil. Here and there towns at the edge of the water as is usual on all the Swiss lakes. The bank on the left hand low but rich in arable ground, wood, and pasture ; beyond it an extensive prospect with Alps whose names we could not discover. This bank rises gradually at the South-east end into a considerable eminence, well wooded and steep.

The island stands on a rock which extends some distance on every side under the water. No place is more easy to conceive without having seen it; it is nearly oval, but its eastern surface is less globular and has a gentle declivity thick-planted with vines, in the midst of which stands the farm house the only dwelling in the isle and not far from the shore. An aged grove of oak proceeds over the summit.

They shew you Rousseau's chamber, the window of which looks towards the east; having those Alps above-mentioned stretched before it. Names may be traced on the walls of people of all nations, persons that have come to see the refuge of this great political saint and prophet. Offerings of thanks by fathers and by mothers to the author of the *Emilius*, calling him their friend and Patron of mankind,

testifying their joy and gratitude for that example of education—I strolled for hours up and down wherever I could find a path in the grove of oaks above-mentioned. Underneath it is a thicket with devious walks. In the most elevated spot a pavilion divides the principal path which follows the direction of the oaks, though by no means in a servile manner. The outside of its walls are feathered with wooden tiles like cottages I had seen somewhere or other on the mountains. After dinner I had a frugal deffert in the grove upon blackberries and immediately fell into a short nap—the air was cool in the thicket, and the light sober and staid. Seats are placed at convenient distances for repose, as well as for the different views over the lake.—Bienne's and Nidau's spires making their reflection on the water

shewed like short grafs beside a clear fountain.

However I was disappointed ; receiving upon the whole less satisfaction than one always expects upon these occasions. But how should any of us expect to enjoy this solitude as he did. To have a pure enjoyment of such retirements, the mind should at least be under the influence of the thoughtful star

“ And join with this

“ Spare fast that oft with Gods doth diet.”

“ or to fit and rightly spell

“ Of every star that Heaven doth shew

“ And every herb that sips the dew.”

“ or

“ The spirit of Plato, to unfold

“ What world, or what vast regions, hold

“ The immortal mind that hath forsook

“ Her mansion in this fleshly nook ;”

or the being like him (that benign and exquisite soul) wrongfully held up to the harsh notions of mankind.

—The country beyond Berne on the other side having much less simplicity of character begins now to be less interesting as well as less easy to describe, except from Burgdorff for about five or six leagues as far as Langenthal; in which compass is the greatest variety of the most beautiful and romantic scenes of wood. In this spot our gardeners and painters might find excellent models, here at least the stride of Nature is not so gigantic but they might hope to keep sight of her, though still they must ever be left far behind—You meet with nothing else remarkable until you come up to the Rhine.

There are two rivers, into which every spring and every flood in Swit-

zerland * ultimately fall ; these are the Rhine and the Rhone, the last I went to see afterwards, but the other at this time, having seen in my way to it the Limmat the Reufs and the Aar, three other rivers by which it is (not inconsiderably) augmented. The Limmat owes its small origin to the mountains of Glarus, among which it went by the name of Linth. Flowing on to within four leagues of Wallenstadt it there becomes the lake of that name. Before it has proceeded five leagues farther its waters increase to so great a bulk that it is obliged to reduce them by the formation of a second lake, that of Zurich, four times as large as the former one: after

* I here suppose the natural (not minding the political) boundaries of Switzerland to be the summits of the St. Bernard, St. Gothard, the Jura, &c. &c.

which, regardless of his former origin, he changes his name for that he now bears.—Some time after this the Limmat makes a very conspicuous figure at the general rendezvous of the rivers near Vogelsang. The Reufs rushes suddenly down the steep of the St. Gothard, and having formed at Fluelen the most romantic of all the lakes, the Lucerne lake, he for some time slackens his pace, falling off towards the right as if exhausted by so great an effort, until reinforced by the Loretz river coming fresh from the lake of Zug: he then presses straight forward without stop or delay and joins the Aar not far from Vogelsang above-mentioned. The Aar begins his career much higher up, and describes it round a much greater extent of territory. Sprung from the top-most Grimsel he calls forth from all the

mountains of Berne his vassal springs and snows—these he quickly beholds gathered together at the lakes of Bri-entz and Thun; then taking along with him a force sufficient to carry off many ordinary torrents he parades along the western region. At Buren he acquires by the Thiele the lake of Bienne, in a word, all the west and north-west lakes and rivers. There is a rendezvous of these three rivers near Vogelsang; where the Limmat and the Reufs, too equal in force to yield to each other and incapable either singly or united of meeting the Rhine, successively abandon themselves up to the Aar who now becomes indeed the rival of the Rhine, and a rival altogether worthy of him. He hurries on, impatient to dispute the honor of representing the rivers of Switzerland, and of conferring his name upon them.

In the mean time the Rhine has passed tranquilly along the whole eastern parts of Switzerland, having set off from the very southernmost extremity. To see in its origin this river destined to stretch its length over no inconsiderable part of the circumference of the globe, to see it when it is but a stripling a puny rill dripping down from a most solitary and august glacier in the Grisons, rocked immediately afterwards in a cradle formed by two close-jutting banks of granite that confine its majestic but yet tender limbs in too narrow a compass, excites surprise and awe, the sentiments we feel in contemplating the infancy of Hercules or the origin of Rome. It forms indeed but one lake ; however that one is the lake Constance, the largest of all the lakes, a most capacious magazine of

waters. Already is he fit to enter that career for which he is born ; already the surrounding country name him chief of the Swiss rivers, and he now advances forward with more kingly gait, his banks receding and making way for him as he gathers his voluminous train. After stepping down the precipice at Lauffen, and at that step the woods re-echoed and the rocks trembled (nor was this a mere seeming) he urges on to meet the Aar.

The struggle was near Guytenburg, where at the very first shock the Aar is overwhelmed and is never heard of more.

The train of this river has ever since been drawing after it, and has ever been resounding over that steep at Lauffen above-mentioned. While you are yet at some distance you discern a mist rising up as of the smoke of so

many boiling springs, which announced it to our eyes, as its din did presently after to our ears like a hundred forges all blowing at once. I hurried to the bank and stood by the mill behind the fall, from whence one can see as far only as the crags that are stuck on its verge; from that point of view I saw throngs of currents shocking and jarring against each other, then united and shot like battering rams against the crags: I saw these again followed close by others and all with irresistible sway rapt down. But if you wish to see it when it wears its most beautiful aspect you must stand on the road in front; here too you command the whole course of the Rhine for some time before and for a considerable time after the fall, when it wheels off abruptly to its left around Lauffen castle. At first the waters,

standing up at least a fathom above the brim, lap over smooth as a round dark-blue polished flint—in a moment they are snatched and hurried down, then begins the foam over which if the sun shines bends the enamoured rainbow. They do not in any part throw themselves plumb down but are fretted over an obliquely-winding rock full of gulphs; and are divided at the very point where they begin to descend into three principal masses by two crags—one of the three masses is larger than the two others added together, this next the Lauffen bank. The dividing crags are covered on this side with moss and shrubs, they have evidently been rift asunder by the currents, and that crag nearest Lauffen being retired more backward than the other, there is ample room for a smaller current to cross over and

leaping down to wrestle with the principal one—another of the crags seems to have been bored through and hollowed out, serving as a muzzle to a part of the torrent that bursts from it like a cannon-ball.

—So that there are several smaller members of the cataract, besides the three main ones, all together putting you in mind of Virgil's *Æolic* cavern through the crevices of which and doors the winds rush in every direction—

There is an ample reservoir formed of old by nature for the waters after their descent ; for they came down with such impetuosity as to be unable to stop themselves in time to wheel off to the left along the channel of the river. Instead of this they were carried straight forwards, a great way, as far as a rock on which a castle stands

where they divided in two : part went off to the left and pursued its course ; the other part was turned off to the right in the form of a vast whirlpool which even now continues and will for ever continue, slowly, but irresistibly turned round by the column of water that darts for ever from the fall. Let no one however tempt this either by rowing or by swimming, for, as it is ever losing itself down the main channel in proportion as it is fresh supplied, it must in doing so first be drawn once under the fall ; the force of which, not to be equalled by many pile-engines, jars the waves exceedingly so that they rise up and beat against the shores like the tide of the sea coming in whose lather and whose briny smell they have likewise. The eye loiters with a fondness that nothing can glut on the fresh and sparkling

sea-green shuffled beneath the foam and smoke, as well as on the globes and pyramids of mist spun off perpetually from all the smaller members. In some parts the water bubbles and springs up like so many jets, from the smaller members only, the main one being fated to rest always an impenetrable gloom. The paintings that we see commonly, do not express all this, and still less the colours whose delicacy and brightness, to say nothing of their incessant shifting, surpass any pencil; the artist ordinarily confuses them together as if from incapacity and despair he had flung a sponge upon the paper, so clumsily is it done.

We then crossed over to the Laufen bank, and had to buffet our way through a labyrinth of currents. The castle is on its summit where also is a small pavilion that appears to you,

while below, to be of the shape and size of a ship-lantern. From this you have what is called a bird's-eye view of the fall, you see it after its descent sliding swiftly forwards brushing at the same time the edges of that whirlpool and overtopping it ; it swims, it rolls over it in a long-continued bough that finely bestrows the sea-green deep with its blossoms of foam. This view however diminishes the breadth of the river too much.

But it is useless to attempt reporting distinctly any thing of what I saw and heard at the lodge below which being at the foot of this hill is flapped over, so to say, by the principal wing of the cataract, for there the waters came by me a mountain-blast ! flinging off eternal clouds whose impetuosity not yet lost bears them up a long time forward in the air in a deep-moving

body. You are struck with a panic you pant for breath, the lodge rocking all the time vehemently to and fro under you.—Having thus seen it in all its aspects, I returned by a private path along the bank of the river to Schaffhausen.

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The best approach of the Gemmi is by the precipices called the galleries in going up which you have one of the grandest views in Switzerland. Among other things you may recollect that the base of the Valois seemed indeed, as Ramond ** calls it, a lake ;

** Ramond is the author that has translated Mr. Cox's tour into the French language ; he has enriched his translation by several remarks and descriptions of his own likewise ; all of them interesting by their style, and many by the information they contain, and the very amusing

but with innumerable islands and peninsulas in it. The villages at a distance on the platform of the mountain had dwindled in size to clusters of dark-brown feeds. Far below our feet vineyards to the bank of the Rhone—Rich grove of firs that descend from the opposite side and wade across the whole valley. Those mounds so frequently thrown up in the center seem very often the work of art; interesting ruins scattered on them. Wastes of sand, and not apparent but real islands formed by the Rhone, so many monuments of the hurry and vehemence of that lawless river—

The shape of the Gemmi rocks has something in it at once terrible and

details. But the best book on Switzerland is the *Etrennes Helvetiennes* which can never be warmly enough recommended to the Public.

strange, that of a glacier reared upright ; up and down the hanging precipices of which is the road woven. It writhes itself up like a worm to the right and to the left alternately. At no time can you divine where it will wind for the next five minutes : it pauses several times, visiting every nook and trying whether it may be firm enough to support its weight ; if it goes straight forwards for a minute or two together it is sure to be stopped short by a fissure of the precipice and is then obliged to return back nearly as it came. The path was often thrust out in the immense void immediately above our heads as well as under our feet like swallows' nests : and wherever you had a perpendicular view of the heights above you saw nothing (as when you first began to ascend) but rocks growing up out of rocks. You

would never even suspect that there was any passage if the path at your feet did not as a clue lead you on ; and to those who have quite descended if they look back a few seconds after, it is gone. We found here a remarkably distinct and musical echo—Snow fell one of the times that I went up over this pass, and the hollows between and underneath the various precipices were smoothed up by a thick fog. The prominent parts of the rocks were often drifted with earth and verdure on which a few sheep were grazing—Stumps of trees have been left by the wood cutters, that might serve to arrest a mule or any unfortunate person in his fall which at first we concluded to be the reason of it, the fact is however that it is the custom even in places where there is no danger. It is in this very manner (though

without being so readily corrected as mistakes are about human intentions,) that even Final causes have been brought into doubt; but with no just reason for we all have inwardly a conviction that they exist in general notwithstanding that the mind of man is still too narrow to assign any particular one. And this I suppose even on the consolatory side of the question; for as to any other it seems at first unaccountable how any man should wish to believe in a Devil and not in a God, yet the alternative is inevitable.

The summit of the Gemmi is a spacious desert overlooked by tall mountains of various shape, crested with glaciers. Poles are placed at certain distances to mark the way; these necessary not only on account of the falls of snow but of the stones that are rained down by the surrounding gla-

ciers, and which are often strown over the path so as completely to bury it. You have never beheld so desolate a place, and if you raised up your eyes for relief to the sky they found no azure blue. At Leuckerboden we had seen the bodies of fourteen wolves that had been killed in this desert. The howling of wolves, and the slithering thunder of glaciers, are the only sounds ever heard by the passenger. There is a lake here, surrounded by rocks that crowd around it in the form of a crater; itself is said to be unfathomable. Not a blade of grass ever rose on its banks; no sportive fish ever shook its stream. During winter when the ice is sufficiently durable the road passes over the middle of this lake; poles are accordingly placed there as usual to mark the way. In passing the Gemmi the first time

which was late in the spring we had begun to go over it, there being still a crust of snow, but we had not made many steps when the guide observed of a sudden that only one pole remained upright ; the reason of which was that the persons (whose office it is) having neglected to remove the poles just before the season was passed none now dared approach it. Some way beyond this lake (which is a league in length) there is however a small inn where you may get wine and coffee and, what is very uncommon, good bread as well as a stable and hay for your horse. — The stony desert extends far beyond this little inn. At last you arrive at a small plain tolerably verdant, and find great numbers as well as infinite varieties of flowers, with grasses, and mosses. Farther on a strip of grass lively enough, and

sprinkled over with wild flowers; the drops in some parts thickly crowded, flopped by the hand of nature in some relenting mood. The mosses that cushioned the heaps of stones were red, yellow, &c. but the moss we saw afterwards on the summit of the St. Plomb, one of the outlets of Italy, was of the colour of vermillion and orange: and in those parts where the masses of rocks were more thinly clad it was with a very minute blueish-green moss as if they had been so many vast blocks of copper over-run with verdigrease; this scene brought to my mind the effect that a country has upon the imagination when viewed through glass of certain colours, though the only change on the objects is as to the colour you seem to be of a sudden in a new planet.

The glaciers have at times made

H

dreadful havoc, of which the crosses you see stuck up here and there are so many monuments; and it is evident from their prowling aspect here that even this morsel has been hitherto spared only to be devoured last. The descent on the other side opens into the magnificent valley of Kandersteig.

This forms the chief avenue to the glaciers.—We are filled with no small surprise and wonder at seeing a body of frozen snows coming down the channel between two mountains into a fertile rich valley, and there existing many degrees below the point whereat snow never melts; indeed glorying in the resplendent and gorgeous robe of heat flung over them by a July sun. A strange companion this truly for flowers and strawberries, such however is the company they are often seen in.—Whatever

may have been the origin of these snows, their continual augmentation at present may be accounted for simply by their union. The larger their mass the more intensely does the common cold glow, if I may use the expression. Thus a forest, when it has become thick to a certain degree, increases in the same proportion that another thin and spare to an equal degree diminishes, though not a single tree more be planted in the one nor cut down in the other.—It cannot be pretended that the thaws during the hot season can balance the new force acquired by these snows, whatever be the season.

Many are of opinion that the glaciers were formed at the creation of the world. They seem, however, to be only so many overgrown piles of snow that the upper parts (called the

horns or peaks) of these mountains fling off from time to time : marks of which are plainly to be seen in the channel along which they pass ; and which as they have been borne down in a body, they have cut and ground like locked wheels *. They suddenly form to themselves a great pit, the depth of which it is impossible to discover. Their surface at the upper parts resembles that of those rocks that lie on the sea shore, when wrinkled and jagged by the action of the waves. The lower parts towards and at the extremity are a smooth heapy bed, not any wise gashed but worn indeed during the great heats by numberless springs which being spun into diminutive cascades and threads of

* Formerly there was a road from Grindelwald to Brieg, in the Valois, but now long since wedged up by glaciers.

water cause a continual twanging and murmur. These again are wound off into a small river that stretches along the valley below.

Sometimes a body of snow is undermined by the heat and rolls downward, this is called an avalanche. Of the two kinds that called the massive avalanche is the most destructive possible, drawing after it a part of the mountain it often crushes a train of twenty or thirty mules that are accidentally passing with their burdens—and has it never upon occasion wedged up the mouth of a valley the sources and rivers of which, thus denied an outlet or finding only after some interval a subterraneous one, rise into lakes? The other, called the avalanche of spray, is perfectly innocent; you see a bank of snow give way, then crumbling to pieces cascade itself in smoke

down a long pent—Its report however puts you in mind of nothing less than the loosening and drawing back of iron bolts and bars, together with the clanking of chains

“ With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
“ Grating harsh thunder.”

From the inn of Grindelwald you see three glaciers, in scrambling up the Wetterhorn to look down upon the first of these I had occasion to see clearly how very much the eye is apt in these places to diminish the apparent distance, height, and size of an object—This deception is greater across a lake; on the other hand, sound is as much increased.—The sun was extremely hot, and darted down vertically his rays upon that particular glacier under my feet; I waited for an hour in hopes of some avalanch

being swung off, but it remained perfectly tranquil.

The valley of Grindelwald was poured in prospect around me, its spacious concave divided into three parts by the three glacier rivers. It resembled a profound sea, ebbcd of its waters; the bottom indeed perfectly green with numberless cottages scattered over it shell-wise. The elder Sheidec had retired a little behind on my right hand, having gracefully fashed its green tunic with the cascade of Millibach.

The second glacier though not so spacious, so purely white, nor rolling so heapy a bed at its base; is for its variety of figure and its hideous barathra far more interesting. Its surface at the upper parts is gasped and rent lengthwise and obliquely, ground over which a plough has lately passed

in a slovenly manner and viewed through a magnifying glass would have the same appearance in every respect but that of colour. In some parts this icy glebe lay only sidelong ; but in others its sharp edges rose up, moulded into a thousand grotesque and fantastic shapes. Every half minute you might hear intermitting noises like the harsh grinding of wagon wheels, the loosening and falling of a tower, or a carriage going suddenly over a vault.

At other times you might hear a noise exactly like the smacking of a whip, this caused by sudden cracks in the ice, disclosing those deep gaps above mentioned.

They were of four different colours according to the different degrees of light and sunshine. At first, when there was least light, they were gray ;

but at midday, of a very brilliant sky-blue : at four or five o'clock in the afternoon they became of a pale bright sea-green, losing itself towards the edges with the softest gradation in white, while in the deepest part of their crevices is lodged a fine Prussian blue. However this glacier was much discoloured by the black sand and stones that the avalanches of the Fietcherhorn had trailed over it.

The higher you rise the more glaciers appear, this being but one of the flood-gates that let them down from that reservoir of glaciers above. What for want of reflection one does not expect, the farther you go off from the Shriekhorn in an ascending direction the loftier and more ample does it appear, and the more does it point its steeps against you—On this side, its summit is certainly inaccessible not

only on account of the trenches formed
 by the glacier, but of its rapidly-
 shelving figure. "Mount Blanc,"
 says Ramond, "is more vast; he
 "scatters down a deluge of frozen
 "snows, nothing but ruins in the val-
 "leys around him. The Shriekhorn,
 "of smaller volume and rather less
 "elevation but incomparably more
 "sharply pointed, is fortified by
 "smaller branches indeed of glaciers
 "however he is still more inaccessible
 "than even his rival: the precipices
 "that rive his avenues are more pro-
 "found, his frozen snows are more
 "shattered, and his declivity is such
 "that even snow itself cannot rest
 "upon it. Like Mount Blanc he is
 "the point of re-union to those veins
 "of crystal whose branches follow
 "the branches of the glaciers so faith-
 "fully, that one cannot help remark-

“ ing their sympathy. Like Mount
 “ Blanc he is the rendezvous of clouds,
 “ and the dispenser of rivers—But in
 “ this last respect he has perhaps a
 “ superiority, the most considerable
 “ rivers rising up out of his domains ;
 “ the lord of the Greek and Pennine
 “ Alps cannot dispute against him a
 “ part of the Po, the Rhone, and the
 “ entire Rhine.”

As there is some danger in these
 visits, one might consider them as
 being at least equal to daring a dis-
 charge of artillery, for they explode
 often and sometimes commit the most
 fatal mischief. But the very same
 principle, that for want of the right-
 ful one encourages many an army in
 the day of battle, makes every one of
 the numbers resorting here hope that
 himself at least may be too fortunate
 to be their victim. However, from

time to time, the forfeit must be paid for the curiosity of so many. The same is the case in several highways of Switzerland, and such is the necessity imposed upon them.

—Nothing remarkable from Grindelwald to Lauterbrunnen, for which place I set off at three in the morning by moonlight. At this place is the cascade of Stoltbach. It is said to be nine hundred feet in length, this single fall. Half way down the rock bends inwardly, seeming to have been twisted awry. We saw several stocks of trees and large stones that it had hurled down in the season of the floods; these had battered a hole in the ground, throwing up the earth around it in a mound. And yet in its ordinary state it is so feeble and slight that it is whipped off by the least wind out of its line of direction. During violent

rains it becomes black, and seems to be sifting down so much foot.

It is over this country that the læmmergeyer ranges, the eagle of the Alps. He measures fifteen or sixteen feet from tip to tip of his wings outstretched, and his ferocity is said to equal his strength and stature. "King of the air," says Ramond, "he requires an extensive territory to subsist in, it is rare that the same region ever sees two of them together."—He adds, "it is chiefly against the chamois that we must see him exert his whole force and address. The chamois has that agility upon ground that the læmmergeyer has in air. He sports upon the very brink of precipices, he flies over distances to the extremity of which it would seem that wings only should transport him, he gains

“ summits so steep that their surface
 “ does not afford room for the foot of
 “ any other creature to rest on, he
 “ precipitates himself from the top of
 “ the loftiest rocks without fear of
 “ breaking his long springs of steel.
 “ Considerable strength must be inse-
 “ parable from such agility; and the
 “ chamois is a prey by no means un-
 “ worthy this most terrible of birds.
 “ The læmmmergeyer rouses up his
 “ prey in the recesses of those uninha-
 “ bitable vallies where he was feeding
 “ secure from the pursuit of man. He
 “ attacks and frightening him forces
 “ him to seek his safety in flight.
 “ The rocks are ordinarily the refuge
 “ of this timorous animal; the eagle
 “ follows and obliges him to gain the
 “ heights—He vaults across the fro-
 “ zen snows, darts (like the lightning
 “ glimpse) from summit to summit,

“ until stopped short upon the shelv-
 “ ing brink of an abyfs he has no other
 “ refource than to turn and make head
 “ againft his dreadful adverfary. The
 “ læmmergeyer, obferving him, turns
 “ him round and round, and feins fe-
 “ veral times that he is going to make
 “ a fwoop at him—the chamois points
 “ his horns againft thefe false attacks,
 “ but juft in the moment when his
 “ pofture is fo ftraightened that it is
 “ eafy to make him lofe his balance,
 “ the eagle advances and with a ftroke
 “ of his wing flings him headlong to
 “ the bottom of the rocks to a depth
 “ fo great that it is impoffible for any
 “ addrefs to fave him—he drops down
 “ clofe after, difpatches him with his
 “ beak and devours him.”

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We returned (from the valley of

Engelberg) by the way we had come to Stanstadt, a little village-port on the right branch of the lake of Lucerne, the rain still continuing. You go over this part of the lake in order to reach Lucerne. Such is the beauty of this part that the bad weather absolutely could not spoil it. I passed the two next days (that proved divine) one to explore its branches, another its channel, taking on the spots what imperfect and mutilated notes I was able.

Upon coming out of Lucerne you are immediately in a great bay; on the left-hand bank of which is a ruined tower seated upon a rock, and robed in trees. Variety and beauty of this bank as well as of the opposite, both being however of nearly equal elevation which is moderate; but the former shines with more glory by means

of its amphitheatrical figure. It is set in a fine frame of rock covered with rich soil and trees, decorated at the same time with villas, you will observe, and not cottages : for these you have on the right-hand bank, and it is a law from which this lake never deviates that no two objects shall be alike, After this we remarked natural piers of rocks, jutting out from the left bank to divide and break the waves ; whereas on the right-hand there is but one and that so over-heaped with trees that they seem tumbling off its ~~back~~ into the water. The unequal outline of this last bank, springing alternately up and down, resembled the flight of a swallow in two or three bounds ; now describing a wide low elliptic arch, then taking a sweep or sloop returned upwards, and at last gradually skimming down

until it alights upon the promontory's extremity and settles there.

This is contrasted, as you advance farther, by mountains that descend from their proud career in the air less gradually—Some of them drop plumb down.

You now come to a second bay, formed by the right branch of the lake.

I observed in the moulding of the mountains and of the shores, a thousand caprices and fancies. Sometimes they remain *fidelong*, too unwieldy to stand erect; ~~but~~^{and} thus stretch along the edge of the water like huge lop-sided vessels. At other times you imagine that you see one, sliding out to view from behind the rest launched out rapidly and far into the middle of the bay; follow the long low pro-

montories, floating like rafts chained to one another.

I observed the woods lounging like herds or flocks up and down the hills; sometimes on their summit, or here and there variously on their sides. Some descending to the very brink of the water and even dipping into it, as it were to try its temperature—Others entering it at once till it reached their waist—Single trees strayed from the rest and couched listlessly.

On the mountains behind Stanstadt you see rocks, woods, and whole pastures with their herds flocks and rivers hoisted up to a vast height in the air—this explained to me the fable of the Titans.

This second bay contains a third within it, of which Stanstadt has the key. Busy motion at the entrance of mountain before mountain, shifting

like scenes. Immediately that you have entered into this third bay, you see at your right hand innumerable hords of trees that stand in array, head above head, making a broad phalanx into which the light can scarcely penetrate.

It was amusing to observe the gamefomeness of the shores whenever we made towards some new bay, or proceeding along the main channel arrived at those parts where it takes a sudden turn as it does often in its mæanders. You see imaginary bounds, and you stretch after them as fast as you can while they at first stop and wait for you; but long are you beguiled by beautiful recesses of water that flit before you, till at last just as you think yourself sure of touching the enchanted shore, the rocks on either side unlocking themselves open

wide and, as soon as they have let you into a new lake, close behind you again.

In this manner is the traveller seduced from one end of the lake to the other, along a maze of lakes, so to say. The whole time it is a drama upon a stage, divided into so many acts.

—The banks of some lakes are too bashful, no one dares advance itself out before the rest to meet the eye of the spectator. (Each waits seemingly determined not to be the first to break silence.) But those of Lucerne shew all their charms, and this without ostentation. Fond of their native liberty they vary themselves into a thousand graceful attitudes and postures; animated, frank, and assured, they display every feature of their character.

In some lakes, such as the Brientz, the Wallenstadt, the mountains crowd together around the shores, shutting out for ever by their skirts all hope of the country beyond them; here fine vistas caused by the mountains standing wide asunder (the shore between lying flat the while) thus affording the eye a pass to other mountains and valleys at a distance, under other skies.

And then, in how masterly a manner are the correspondent shores of this lake contrasted! Suppose for instance that you stand in the spot that is midway between the two branches. Turning your face now towards the right branch, there Mount Pilate, seated opposite you, is at first a gradual ascent sinking into a concave uncommonly fertile. Its peak is naked rock, or if covered, it is either with snow or with clouds (hence its name;) and it

is commonly thought inaccessible. At the same time spreading forth with no small majesty around all that shore its limbs, over which long stony robes fall in large loose-flowing folds down to its very feet underneath the water—In its lap it holds the freshest verdure—Then turning your face towards the left branch—there stands Mount Righi, not directly opposite you but more towards your right hand; forming the whole left shore of the lake's channel (as far as Lowerz) and of its left branch the whole right shore, all in one vast angle: and differing from Mount Pilate in every respect. It rises in the form of a pyramid, it rears a small smooth summit, and its sides are so aslant that often the plodding cow finds herself at the very peak. Its soil is neither rocky nor verdant but flaty, scanty firs here and there

having terraces or seeming to have them, as is frequent on the Swiss mountains, with this singularity, that as two mountains are pitched on the corner of its base that stands on your right hand, under their accumulated pressure it has sunk prodigiously, so that its terraces run in a downward direction steeply and suddenly into the water.

We now went along the left branch of the lake ; this is the fourth bay. At the entrance there is an oblong rock that, having of yore gathered together some gravel and soil, has formed out of them a small island. In process of time verdure and trees have grown upon it. Here stands an obelisk to the memory of those who founded the Swiss independence. Near it are two or three other rocks, much smaller that thrust themselves barely up above

the surface of the water; one of which, surmounted by a chapel in miniature dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is grotesque enough. In exploring this wizard lake you often see different spots decked with these little chapels — Ruins of Hapsburg castle on the left bank which, upon the whole, recalls to you strongly the Evian bank of the Geneva lake, but short of its mountains.

After what has been already said by so many it would be difficult perhaps to describe any more of this lovely lake without falling into repetitions. It is sufficient to add that, having in the above compass displayed what is in its kind without example and beyond imitation, it gave successively, as we proceeded the whole way along its channel, a handsome resemblance of several other lakes such as the Thun

and the Zug but above all of the Wallenstadt. These resemblances give ideas of improvement upon those lakes—and it were to be wished that in this respect art would catch a hint from nature, and thus attain the most sensible the noblest and the only lawful kind of criticism.—We disembarked at Fluelen, and proceeded directly to Altorff, a short league distant, where we slept.

Set off from Altorff, June the fourth, at six o'clock in the morning, in the midst of a foggy rain which continued all day. Our journey lay to the St. Gothard up along the valley of Schœl-len by the banks of the river Reufs. For the first hour or two the valley resembled strongly the Oberhasley, bereft of its cascades. For the next hour and a half it recalled incessantly to my mind the rising part of that which

leads to Engelberg with this difference, that the road to-day had no wood to burrow itself up through as it has in that place; and that the banks of the valley here were considerably steeper, as well as its base broader, occupied entirely by the river. Whenever we stopped to rest and to look back on the road we had come, it raised our admiration to behold the spirited emulation and boldness of so many mountains towering aloft, while groves of firs were rising up and scaling (like military tortoises) the banks underneath them.—We had now entered some way into Uri's rocky canton. What we had hitherto beheld might for the greater part be seen perhaps in other countries; but the scenes of this day can be found only in an Alpine landscape. Ghastly precipices, above which shivering half-

starved firs were clinging to the stark rocks; here and there a handful of verdure inaccessible to any animal without wings unless a chamois—Every half-hour, the wilderness became more squalid erect and gloomy, the rain not in the least abating nor the fog.

From time to time, the mountains have rolled down ruins of stone which lie scattered variously up and down the valley. They are ever like so many volcanos flinging around them heaps of stones, over-running the valley with a lava of rocks which snap short and blast the once-luxuriant woods that grow on their banks—Fine head-long lumbering cataracts—nor was it easy to hear any person speaking to you, as well from the jarring and hubbub of the cataracts, as of the river, though it was at a considerable dis-

tance below. The trees and verdure had for some hours past gradually flunk away from us one after another; at last they forsook us altogether— After a toilsome march ascending the whole day we arrived at the last of the five bridges late in the evening, as we thought, situated as it is at the farthest extremity of the valley, in the very profoundest and most abrupt part of it. This part of the valley seems to every one to have been formed by the two highest mountains of entire granite being suddenly torn asunder. By the force of the separation, that one on the left hand has lost its balance, and lies strown supinely, covering a length of land; the other on your right hand remains upright, however with its brow somewhat inclined over its feet and louring down upon you

Monstrum — — — cui lumen ademptum est!

the interval at their feet (no matter how broad or deep below the road) is instantly smothered up by the drift of the river. The bridge does not vault over it at once, but it begins by making short bounds as it were on different jutting points of that wall on the right hand, seeking for some resting place from which, having a firm footing, it may take its spring: Finding after some time a very scanty one it then makes this leap to a point on the opposite rock still loftier above which it climbs some way with the greatest dispatch, were it to stop too soon it might relapse into the abyfs—Immediately after, we found ourselves in the spacious duct of a rock for the space of fixty if not eighty paces—We could distinguish nothing for the darkness, but we could feel drops distilling from the roof upon our heads. By the time we

were restored to light, the day had run back, it being afternoon only. In the midst of a small verdant plain, surrounded by sunny low hills, was the river Reufs, gliding along with a mildness that you would believe it incapable of that fury and vehemence we had but just witnessed and which had astonished us for the greater part of a day. Straight before us at a quarter of an hour's distance lay Urseren, and at the distance of three quarters of an hour the village Hôpital with an old ruined castle above it; between these lay the summit of the St. Gothard.

The mountain of the St. Gothard being a country of itself elevated to an extraordinary height and the smallest of its parts entirely occupying the eye you have no object of comparison by which to estimate its size, hence it

makes not that impression upon a traveller that is expected. It requires reflection here to have cause of wonder, on the scale of philosophy on the other hand it makes no small sensation. Thus when we read of the Shriekhorn rising two miles and a half, and of Mount Blanc rising three miles in perpendicular height above the surface of the ocean, one expects a precipice of that height, which would be really stupendous. But before we can obtain a near view of their summit, we have already without perceiving it ascended these mountains upwards of two-thirds. You may be said to have begun the ascent the instant that you plant your foot on Switzerland off the plains of France Germany or Italy. You never think so little of the Shriekhorn as when nearest its peak.

—The road over the summit of the St. Gothard is a paved causeway, and enjoys no view whatever but of the banks on the right, and on the left hand. These are but of moderate elevation and are very monotonous.—Not a tree to be seen—The ascent, before you arrive at the regions of snow, exactly resembles the wild parts of Scotland which it recalled strongly to my mind. The day was remarkably fine, and the black crags that stood out naked above the snow (which was of the most brilliant whiteness) made the scene resemble a new map, stained with continents and myriads of islands —The snow becomes hard as pavement when trodden. The river Reuss came boisterously down the mountain in several long bounds. In many places it was covered with snow, a fathom or more in thickness, and

which it had undermined and scooped out into arches. We threw down the heaviest stones that we could lift upon these arches but with little or no effect. There are on the summit several small lakes, the respective sources of the Reufs and Tesino. As they were smoothed over with snow we passed over them without knowing it at the time. On one side, at a day's distance, is the source of the Rhine; and on the other, at the same distance, of the Rhone.

“ The summit of the St. Gothard,” says Ramond, “ is a platform of bare
 “ granite, girt round by a few rocks
 “ of moderate elevation, very irregular in their figure, and which shutting up the eye on all sides confine
 “ it to the most frightful of solitudes.
 “ Three puny lakes, and the melancholy hut of the capuchins, are the
 “ only objects that break the uni-

“ formity of this desert, where not the
“ slightest trace of vegetation is to be
“ found. It must be a circumstance
“ altogether new and surprising to a
“ person, who had never before quit-
“ ted the plains, to observe the deep
“ silence that reigns over this plat-
“ form. The least murmur is not to
“ be heard; the wind in traversing
“ the skies never meets a leaf here
“ whose rustling might betray its
“ passage, indeed when it becomes
“ high it sighs against the points of
“ the rocks in a most lugubrious
“ manner. It would be to no pur-
“ pose to climb up those summits a-
“ round this desert that are accessible.
“ You might, indeed, hope to trans-
“ port the eye to a habitable climate,
“ but you would find nothing but a
“ chaos of rocks and torrents under-
“ neath you. You would distinguish

“ from afar parched and barren points
 “ covered with snows, and piercing
 “ up through the cloud that floats
 “ over, covering them with a veil
 “ very often impenetrable to the eye
 “ —nothing of what exists beyond
 “ would reach your sight, except a
 “ dimly-dark blue sky which swing-
 “ ing far below the horizon would
 “ bound the picture on all sides, and
 “ seem an immense sea surrounding
 “ this heap of mountains.”

The valley of Urseren, of about two or three leagues in length, is but a furrow on the St. Gothard. One of the horns of the river Reufs curves through the midst of it. This valley is the point of re-union of five great outlets: one to Altorff, another to the Grisons, a third to the Grimsel, a fourth to the Valois, and the last to Italy.

At six o'clock in the morning we

left Rêalp to go down into the Valois, by the passage of the Furcæ. At first there was a dense mist, and the sun shed athwart it a sickly red colour over the valleys, and a certain wild and fantastic indistinctness not unlike a dream. After some time the mist pined away and we were left to an open warm blue sky, while a row of light silvery clouds remained basking on the bosom of the mountains.—In a few hours you pass by the glacier of Rhone, and presently after the hemisphere is turned fast downward over the Valois.

The valley that goes by this name is every way the most extensive in Switzerland; it is upwards of eighty-two miles in length, taken from the Furcæ to St. Maurice. Such however is rather its political than its natural length; it being in fact prolonged to

Villeneuve, twelve or eighteen miles farther. This is the rich and ample inheritance of the Rhone ; here he exercises free and uncontrouled his solitary reign. For some time after his birth he shews no peculiar character that distinguishes him from other Swiss rivers : his size, his colour, his pace, and his surrounding mansions of fir and rock, are the same. In some parts he has within the main valley another, a smaller one, for his own use only. (The Valois has besides a vast number of subsidiary valleys, each of which has at least one river that serves to pamper the Rhone, so emphatically styled, by Ramond, the destroyer of the vales.)—His capricious and arbitrary character—He invades and lays waste the fertile fields, only to abandon them the moment after—That these wide domains are his only—that

it is only by his sufferance man has the transient possession of any part of them. After a course of ninety-four miles he drives with such furious onset upon the Geneva lake that the latter has not time to order its waters to make way, and there is a perpetual tempest at that part. Directly after he wheels round to the left shore and disappears totally where the lake is more than nine hundred fathoms in depth. We may therefore take the poetical licence of imagining if we please that the river, too impatient to wait, plunges at once down into the deepest part and after one continued dive of five and forty miles emerges again a short way on this side Geneva, where it is certain he re-appears for the first time. At Geneva, his height size and swiftness prove to be such, that one might be led to think there

must be a purpose in fixing those numerous and vast lakes on each side of the Alps : by these such rivers as the Rhone and the Po are curbed ; which were they not they might, when stung by the summer star, in their frenzy tear up the plains and roll them off far into the ocean.

There now remaining no part of Switzerland that might not be readily imagined I took leave of it at Brieg the most temperate spot in the Valois. It lies at the foot of the Simplon, the most romantic of all the passes to Italy and the longest, taking up fifteen hours, so that you pass a night on the mountain. Early in the morning then we began the ascent of the mountain in our way to that beautiful region. Nothing can be more pleasing than to observe the alteration and growth of a prospect successively always as one

ascends: the part immediately under your eyes sinking every moment and the opposite one buoying up as sensibly, the horizon distending and expanding itself on all sides. There seemed to be a challenge between the villages and cabins which should spring highest, serving to mark some hundred feet in a perpendicular scale between each mountain-story. The mountains every where furried over with fir; in some parts this cloathing resembled a bear's rough-clotted coat. But at the greatest distance they became more scanty, and shewed no bigger than prickles of thorns. At any height that you ascend you can never see beyond twelve or eighteen miles, both directions added together; this owing to the sinuosity of the valley in every sense, in its base as well as in its sides. For if its volume is too

much compressed by the mountains at one part, it dilates itself at another.— Sometimes the meadows lie flat, sometimes in a reclining posture, hooded by trees: sometimes they can creep up to the foot only of the mountains but whenever they are accessible climb them to a vast height, there with their charge of cabins and flocks all clinging to their nutritious breasts they repose securely.

Imagine our plains to be disjointed or broken in pieces by some earthquake, then suddenly thrown together again in a heap absolutely at random — That in process of time this heap has become strown over with trees mosses and verdure of every sort, while hamlets single or in clusters have been crumbled over it: that the rivers after several falls have gained the natural

channels and passing in their course through several wide and deep chasms have filled them up, composing thus so many extensive lakes : such, for the greater part, is the country that we have been just passing over.

(Accordingly, all that you have to do in travelling is to follow these rivers ; they will serve you as an infallible clue, and will conduct you successively upon all the lakes, amidst labyrinths of strangest scenery.)

In those regions the traveller sees or thinks he sees the utmost violence done to the component parts of landscape that can be imagined. Clouds sinking and grovelling on the ground, while whole plains are flung up several hundred fathoms into the air ; on the topmost pinnacle of these again does a lake weave its ample web. Market towns with their massive churches

pitching their foundations on the verge of a precipice. Pastures with their herds and flocks upon them hung up little less afloat than a map—And rivers pacing with frenzy along, and at a height that the inhabitant of the plain is at first lost in astonishment how they could ascend there.

—What if you had seen the reverse to Pope's image of a downward sky reflected in a pool of water, an upward earth! not fictitious, but with real shrubs (if not trees) stooping down from it—what if you had heard the mountains yell, and the mass that forthwith comes down along the valley! to which forests of fir are mere reeds, and houses and whole villages but cobwebs

—The works of nature giving awkward imitations of the works of man, as when rocks take the semblance of

castles with turreted towers, or of spires, obelisks, magic cells, alcoves; or as when stuck round with pines that rise perpendicular like so many parallel columns, order above order, the whole forming a sylvan amphitheatre—Above our road rivulets drop straight down into the deepest valleys, fathoming them like a plummet line.

Various soils crowded together, various climates suddenly succeeding each other, mixture of seasons! Snows rising refreshed from the bosom of summer, and in the lap of bleakest ice aromatic herbs or glad fruits brightening—And sudden the ground gives way and a river in its full magnitude sinks down, nor is its course to be followed but by the ear long afterward—Late rising of the sun, and early setting of it.

Insulated spots of verdure envelop-

ed by rocks, (so many sweet kernels within their shells)—putting us in mind of the fruitful islands of Philip Quarl sequestered far in the solitudes of the ocean, and destined to remain for ever untouched by man.

A traveller sees through the dusk a distant village and approaches it; it plunges and disappears. Some minutes after, it emerges again out to view much farther off than before. Then when he is least aware it dives a second time.

Sometimes this country, (like the English climate) from being excessively inconstant, becomes constant from variety affects uniformity; conceits and paradoxes would be its best description. Some vallies are composed of rock entire, pure of almost any other ingredient; not a leaf, nor a blade of grass to be discerned. Others

there are whose base is water. Some, where the forlorn eye is greeted by nothing but stunted grass or moss; some, but slate—or sand.

Even the works of art here take a wildness and a hardihood from Nature. We see bridges tripping across chasms of the globe, and mocking abysses of water; we see roads lashed round the peaks of mountains that totter with age, or clung to the headlong steep of a precipice.

“ Sed jam tempus equum fumantia folvere colla.”

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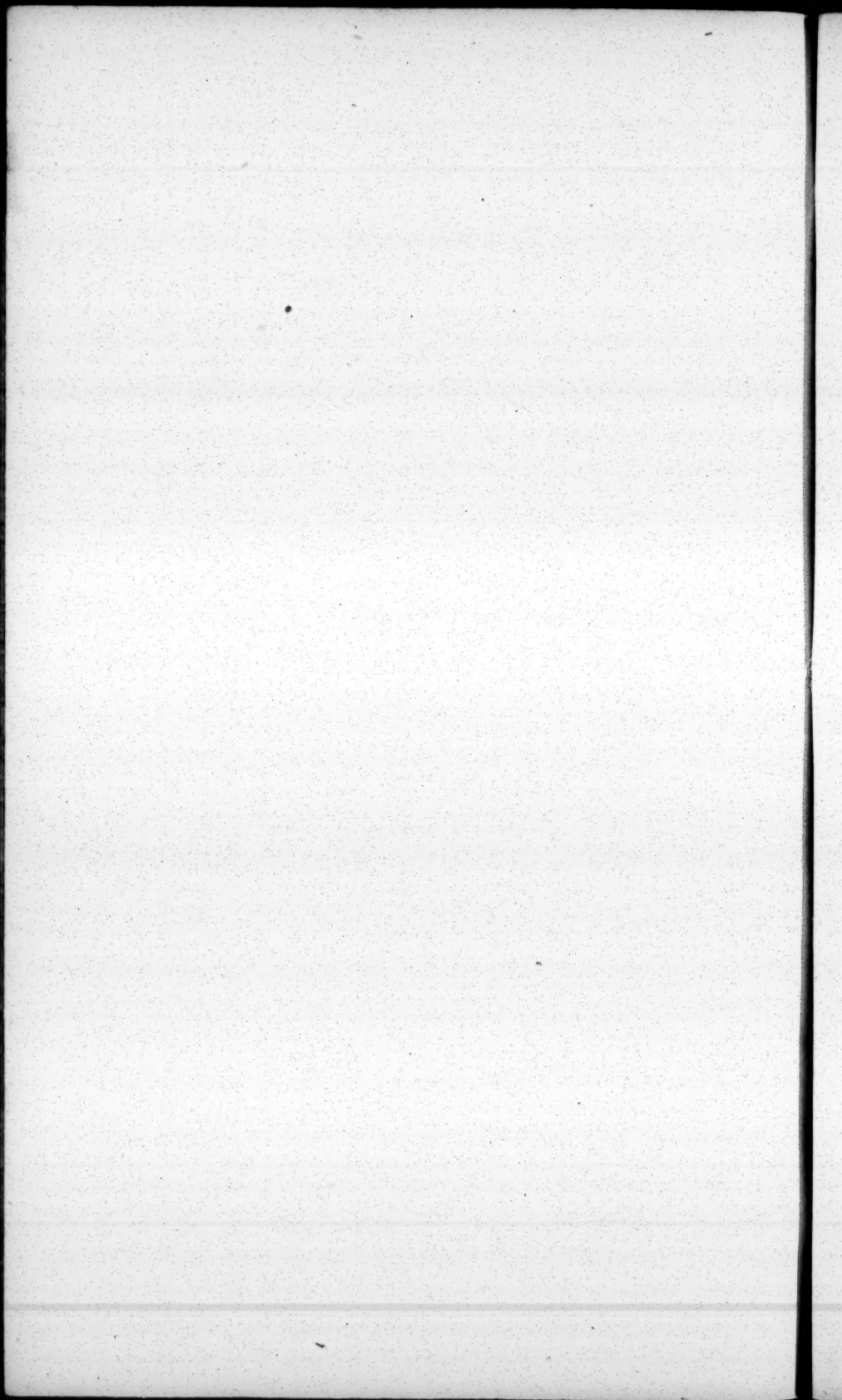
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“ Sed jam tempus equum fumantia solvere colla.”



4